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EL8-4994

Kai  
Thm

26 July 1956

## MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Proposal to transfer foreign Board of Geographic Names responsibilities to CIA

Conversation between Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Interior and Mr. Amory

1. I stated that the proposal contained in Mr. Kerner's unsigned letter of 29 June 1956 to the Director had been thoroughly studied and reviewed by competent personnel of CIA and that their recommendation had been reviewed and approved by the Director. I said that it had been concluded that CIA could not consent in the proposed transfer to it of the BGN functions and that therefore if a letter similar to the one submitted in draft to the Director were to be officially dispatched, the Director would reply in the negative.

2. I went right on to develop our reasoning along the following lines. We concurred in the undesirability and inappropriateness of the current assignment to the Department of Interior of work in a foreign field and would do everything we could to help Interior dispose of these functions to an appropriate agency or department. We felt strongly that this work was not within our assigned statutory and BSC functions except accidentally and partially. I pointed out that our production of maps was limited to highly specialized ones and that the prime producers were located in the Department of Defense. I also pointed out that the serious issues that were solved from time to time by the Board on the basis of cartographic studies performed by Interior's Office of Geography involved questions of foreign policy falling particularly within the responsibility of the Department of State (e.g., should certain or Polish be used for place names in the Trans-Siberian area). I concluded by saying that we did not think it appropriate to make a recommendation that a specific department of the government be charged with this function but merely pointed out the fact that the issue involved several departments and agencies outside of Interior and CIA. Therefore, I recommended that CIA join with Interior in asking the Bureau of the Budget to seize itself of the problem.

3. Mr. Kerner accepted the foregoing very cordially and warmly reiterating his strong conclusion that the present situation, whereby Interior has the nominal responsibility but is not allowed to get any funds to carry it out except the subsidies now received from CIA and Defense, must be altered.

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I said that I thought the procedure I recommended could come up with a solution in ample time to have it effective at the beginning of FY 1958 which was the target date. He canvassed the idea of having Secretary Benton call [REDACTED] but we finally agreed that the simplest procedure was to have a preliminary meeting with the appropriate working levels of the Budget as a starter. His Administrative Assistant in charge of Budgetary Affairs will call us next week and together we will arrange to meet with Messrs. Perry and Wilhelm and the Budget people who handle Interior matters to set forth the problem and determine further procedures for handling it.

WILENT AGENCY, JR.  
Deputy Director/Intelligence

ODDI:RAJr.:jfb

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